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The Curse of Contentment

BY THE EDITOR

ST. PAUL said, "Godliness with contentment is great gain." But I am thinking of that sort of contentment that has too small an element of godliness, and is principally just contentment. The metaphor is a hog that has eaten all he can hold and has done that so habitually and so long that he has grown fat, and now he finds a cool place under the shade of a tree and lies down and just grunts. That sort of a life may be all right for a hog, but it is a poor life for a preacher.

But our metaphor is limited. The picture would be worse if it were that of a poor hog that has become a fatalist and has decided to just be poor and underfed and just lie and grunt anyhow.

But I am not thinking of hogs anyway. I am thinking of preachers. Preachers who have done quite well and have become aware of it. And having become aware that they are efficient and successful, they have ceased to strive. They may tell how they used to "burn midnight oil" in the pursuit of knowledge, but now they go to bed early and get up late and read only well digested books and magazines and newspapers and rest and grunt contentedly and resent it when anyone tries to stir them up.

I am thinking of preachers who came to the ministry from lowly station and had to fight hard to overcome an inferiority complex. But they have found out that they are about as polished as the majority with whom they must associate, so now they just rest and canker and rust.

I am thinking of preachers who knew at the beginning that one cannot be an unctuous preacher unless he is an insistent prayer, and they fasted and prayed and "soaked" their souls in meditation and solitariness before God. But they have found out how to influence the people by human manipulations, and they have their sermons pretty much by heart, and they are away out and beyond any taint of modernism or want of orthodoxy. So they thrash over their old straw that did once have a lot of wheat in it, and they sound out platitudes of praise and hold their popularity and they are already dying of contentment.

I am thinking of preachers who have lost or are losing their passion for souls. They are right at heart in that they would be glad if everybody would get saved and do right and go to heaven. But they no longer suffer the pangs of the sinbearer or endure the travail which birth involves. Weak well-wishing is taking the place of heart agony which once found expression in the words, "Give me souls or take my soul."

I am thinking of preachers who can't be kicked into a fight. If anybody objects they will not attempt to have a revival. If "the brethren" think the budgets are too high, they will seek to have them reduced. If people won't come to church they will not go out after them. If their church won't fly they will just let her walk or stand still. If a program is not easy to carry out they will just whittle the program down. If anyone says, "It can't be done," they just eliminate that project from the list.

Contented preachers who are sleek and fat and lazy or who have decided to just be lean and hungry and not do anything about it! Contented preachers who have agreed to "Let well enough alone," and who keep on bringing their "well enough" down to the level of whatever is.

I tell you, brethren, we are in a conflict, a battle, yea, a war. Contentment that reduces the temperature of the fighting blood is a curse. Better that a man should be always on the road than that he should arrive and never find it out. The man who "thinks he can't" is no worse off than the man who contends he has already done it. There is little hope for either one.

A man approached a house and inquired for work. The woman who met him at the door, said, "We do not need anyone. You would be surprised at how little work we have." But the applicant replied unabashed, "Lady, you would be surprised how little work it takes to keep

me busy." And I have thought it is like that with many a preacher. On the other hand, there are preachers who keep so busy at so many things that if only half of their undertakings do some good they will get ahead. May God deliver us from the curse of contentment!

Editorial Notes

This is just the time of the year when the publishers of the PREACHER'S MAGAZINE have to consider the question of the life or death of the publication. I was personally more responsible for the initiation of this magazine than anyone else, and I believe it has done some good. But it is beyond my power to insist upon the continuation of THE MAGAZINE—that is for the subscribers and the publishers to decide. Well, principally, it is for the subscribers to decide; for the publishers always turn to the subscription list whenever the question is brought up. Any time I say, PREACHER'S MAGAZINE at the Nazarene Publishing House, either the manager or the assistant manager says, "Let's see, what is the subscription list now?" And preachers are about like other people when it comes to postponing the carrying out of a good intention—the renewal of their subscription for example. Just what have you done about yours? If you have not renewed, please do not delay.

Often we have called attention to the fact that we have a limited field in which to advertise the PREACHER'S MAGAZINE. If we give notice of it even in a publication like the *Herald of Holiness* the majority of the readers are eligible to subscribe, for our list is limited to preachers. This is why we appeal so often to our subscribers to solicit a subscription from a brother preacher. A single word of personal solicitation is worth whole columns of general advertising, since we can appeal to such a small percentage of the

population. So here I am again asking every reader of the PREACHER'S MAGAZINE to ask some brother preacher to subscribe. And I would so much appreciate it if you would just render the service of offering to send in the subscription for the new prospect. Just a little encouragement like that will often turn a mere good intention into a good deed. Please do this right away.

I have been experimenting on the reading habit for some months now, and have been surprised at the results—in quantity, at least. I am not a really fast reader, but I have been able to read from two to four good-size books a week, mostly just in spare time. My plan is this: I keep a different book handy for each different place; one in my car to read while waiting for my wife to buy the groceries or for some friend to make a call or get his hat; another on the mantel where I can reach and get it when I find that lunch will not be ready for five minutes yet; another, of smaller physical size, I keep in a convenient pocket to read when I take a trolley or train or bus. And the remarkable thing is that I find I can leave off at the end of any paragraph and take up there again at convenience without any necessity for reviewing past reading to "get the connection."

But I suppose it is not possible to tell anyone how to read. Some, I know, mark and file and reread in order to feel they have done it right. I read right on through and make no particular effort to remember. I calculate that if a thought is not strong enough to cling on it is too

weak to be of much help anyway. So I do not memorize or file and do not specialize on formal quotation—although, of course, I know I must call up what I have read, even when I am not aware of it. But whatever the plan, if a preacher would be heard he must read. Usually we say that if one would be heard he must listen to others. But the preacher has but little chance to listen, so he must read to make up for it, and if he speaks much, he must read much.

I was in a service the other day where they were selling Evangelist Otho Schwab's little book on "Sanctification, What, When, How?" and I bought a copy. I shall read that book with great care. I know it was written especially for distribution among people who are not familiar with our central thesis of doctrine and experience, but I have not the slightest doubt that it will help me also. Often a good field in a familiar landscape is opened up and we are thankful. Wesley used to listen very carefully in the testimony meeting for some message that God would be pleased to send to him. We must produce, read and publish good literature dealing with our central thesis and with all the fundamentals of our holy faith. There is place for a new crusade of holiness literature.

One thing more, please be on the lookout for material which would help your brother preachers and send it to us for the PREACHER'S MAGAZINE. Any time you have an outline, illustration or other contribution you would be willing to pass along, please send it to us. Help us make the PREACHER'S MAGAZINE "Better than ever."

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DOCTRINAL

THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION

PAUL S. HILL

THE doctrine of predestination has afforded a ground for much discussion in the Church during the past. Much of this discussion has been useless, but some of it has been very helpful and beneficial. In general the doctrine of predestination has grown out of an interpretation of the sovereignty of God. That is, the sovereignty of God rather than His wisdom. Love or holiness has been made to stand for the most pronounced characteristic of God, and consequently with the emphasis placed on this attribute of divinity there has been built up a system of thinking which centers around predestination as a natural sequence to divine sovereignty. Or to make it more clear perhaps we could say that the doctrine of predestination would not spring so naturally from a consideration of the wisdom of God, or His love or holiness or any other attribute or characteristic of God as it does from His sovereignty. It is from the interpretation of the sovereignty of God that the doctrine of predestination has sprung.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

The doctrine of the sovereignty of God is a true doctrine. To have less than a sovereign God is to have no God at all. In God there must be the *absolute*. There must be wisdom in the absolute, also justice, and goodness. These and all the other attributes of God must exist in the absolute degrees. The absolute is God's and His alone. Thus the sovereignty of God is absolute. There is none more sovereign, no higher power, no higher will

or authority. The sovereignty of God is absolute. It is this fact, this truth of the absolute in the sovereignty of God that has furnished the basis for the doctrine of predestination.

PREDESTINATION DEFINED

Webster defines predestination as "the act of predestinating, or state of being predestinated." (2) "The purpose or decree of God from eternity respecting all events; especially the preordination of men to everlasting happiness or misery. More especially preordination to eternal life."

There is a much fuller definition given than is quoted above, but this conveys the central idea of predestination as used in the theological discussions during the days of Calvin and since. It must be borne in mind, however, that the dictionary definition of predestination and the Bible teaching of predestination are not necessarily the same. The dictionary defines the term as it is used in the theological discussions of the day when the dictionary was in process of making, and simply defined the word without regard to the theological truth or untruth of the doctrine itself.

In his explanation as to how he arrived at the meaning of words Mr. Webster frankly states that he made inquiry of those who used the word and to whom it had a definite meaning. As an illustration of his method of obtaining a definition he made inquiry of the scientists as to the meaning of scientific terms, the chemists supplied him with the exact meaning of chemical terms and words, the engineers were his source of information regarding the meaning of engineering terms, etc.

Following this method he, of course, would ask the theologians for the meaning of theological terms with the result that the above definition was given as defining the meaning of predestination.

We have no quarrel with the dictionary. We think the method of obtaining accurate definitions is the best possible, but it is easy to see how a meaning could be written into a definition which would be misleading in reference to the truth or untruth of the doctrine defined. Especially could this be so in regard to doctrines of a theological nature. It could be also true of other fields of debated things. A scientific term might express the teaching of a school of scientists and yet that particular school of scientists be faulty in their treatment of the subject in hand. Or a political group might use a term or word until it was related almost wholly to their doctrine of politics, and yet the political doctrine held by that particular group might not be true to the whole subject of government. And thus we might enlarge to show how the definition of a term might be misleading as stating the truth of the matter. Especially can this be true in reference to doctrines or statements of belief. It is easier to define a solid thing such as a stone or stick than it is a doctrine. A definition of a solid thing is more likely to be true to the actuality of the matter than a definition of a doctrine be true to the doctrine as that doctrine stands in relation to all truth of which it is a part. Therefore we examine this definition not with the thought that the definition does not properly define the teaching of those theologians who are known as predestinarians, but rather with the query as to whether the definition properly defines the doctrine of predestination itself. Is the doctrine of predestination exactly as defined by the definition? We admit that it defines predestination as taught by the predestinarians, but are the predestinarians entirely true to the doctrine as that

doctrine stands in relation to all truth of which it is a part?

THE DEFINITION FURTHER EXAMINED

The definition as given above contains two parts which according to the definition are unalterably related to each other. One part refers to the purposes and decrees of God from all eternity. The other part refers to all events, and especially to men in their relation to eternal salvation or damnation. As the definition stands it *relates* these *events* and *men* unalterably to the eternal decree and purpose of God, so that all events and all men are so fixed by the eternal purpose and decree of God that they are unalterably established. Nothing can be changed. Everything is as it must be. Nothing could have been different from what it was or is. Nothing of the future can be shaped by any force whatever so that it can be anything but what was predestinated by the eternal purpose and decree of God.

We do not question the definition as expressing the teaching of the predestinarians. It is true to what they teach, but the question we ask is, Is there that unalterable relation between the eternal purpose and decree of God and all events of earth and time, and the eternal salvation or damnation of all men? Is this doctrine true? Does this definition truly express the doctrine of predestination as it is taught in the Word of God? Not as it is taught by the predestinarians, but by the Bible, which is the source of all revealed truth. The thing to settle is not the fact of the eternal purpose and decree of God, neither the fact of events, and the eternal salvation or damnation of men. These enter into the discussion of course. They are both truths. It is true that God is sovereign. It is true that He has purposes and decrees dating back to eternity. It is also true that there are events, and men, and salvation and damnation eternally, but the question is, "Do the eter-

nal purposes and decrees of God pre-terminate and predestinate all events, the actions of all men, the eternal salvation or damnation of every soul? In other words is there the unalterable relation between the purposes and councils of God and all events and men that this definition teaches? The predestinarians say, "Yes." An examination of the purposes and decrees of God, together with an examination of events and the question of salvation should give us an answer.

THE QUESTION FURTHER ENLARGED

The question we raise is the relation between the eternal purposes and decrees of God and all events and moral issues of men which stand to save or damn them eternally. We do not question the eternal purposes and decrees of God nor do we question the fact of events and their relation to men in time and eternity. What we do question is the unalterable and unchangingness of human events in their relation to the eternal purposes and decrees of God. Is there a relationship between the eternal purposes of God and all events so that *all* events, and *all* human history, and *all* the processes of salvation and damnation in their workings in time and eternity, are unalterably fixed? Has the eternal purpose of God fixed every event of earth and time? Has the eternal purpose of God unalterably fixed the future of each soul of man for all eternity, regardless of every other factor and force with which men think they deal?

Again we state that we do not deny the sovereignty of God, nor His eternal purposes and decree; neither do we deny the fact of events and the eternal salvation or eternal lostness of the souls of men. The question raised is not in reference to the truth of either of these two propositions which enter into the definition of predestination. What we seek to know is the relation of these two truths to each other. Is every event of time and eternity,

every curse and sin as well as every blessing and good, fixed unalterably so that everything that has been, and is, and shall be, is only what the sovereignty of God has decreed without regard to any other factors with which at least men think they deal?

STATING THE CASE OF THE ETERNAL PURPOSE AND DECREE OF GOD

The eternal nature of God is an argument for His sovereignty. Also the sovereignty of God is an argument for His eternity. These two characteristics of God supply the needed ground for the eternal purposes and decrees of deity. Without eternity as a fact in the nature of God there can be no eternal in the purposes and decrees, and without the sovereignty of God there can be no unalterable and unchangeable purposes that reach back into eternity. It is from the eternal sovereignty of God that we argue the eternal purposes and decrees. Both *eternity* and *sovereignty* are necessary to the foundation of eternal purposes and decrees. To deny either of these great characteristics as belonging to God is to at once admit that eternal purposes and decrees do not exist, for it is easy to see that inasmuch as eternity and sovereignty are written into the eternal purposes and decrees of God, without these two factors the whole matter falls for lack of a proper foundation and premise. But granting these two characteristics as belonging to God (and without them God cannot be) there is seen at once not only a possibility for eternal purposes and decrees, but there is also ground for reasoning that such purposes and decrees are not only possible but certain. Not only does the eternity and sovereignty of God stand for a possibility of eternal purposes and decrees, but it also stands to assure us that such eternal purposes and decrees shall be issued from the Godhead.

Eternity belongs alone to God. No creation, be it material universe, angels

or men, has the quality of eternity belonging to it. God alone is eternal. Eternity and God are inseparable. We should not think that the relation between God and eternity is such as can be expressed as God clothing Himself with eternity, as though God were a Being separate from eternity and coexistent with it, and using it as a measuring stick in order to express His duration to humanity. Such reasoning makes for a separation between God and eternity. The truth is that God is *eternal*, not in the sense of being coexistent with eternity but in the sense that eternity is a nature and characteristic that is contained within the very being of the Godhead, so that without God there can be no eternity any more than there can be justice, or love, or goodness, or any other attribute of deity. He is the *eternal* God.

Unless this idea of eternity as an attribute and characteristic of deity be accepted we have two coexistents, which make the entire idea of God impossible. With eternity as merely infinite time stretching back into the past and forward into the future, a something coexistent with the existence of God, we have not only God to deal with but also eternity. Aside from, and outside of, the very nature of God eternity, as such, has no meaning nor purpose. The truth of revelation shows God and eternity inseparable. Without God there can be no eternity. Without eternity there can be no God.

WHAT ETERNITY IN THE GODHEAD MEANS

Aside from the eternal purposes and decrees of God which spring from His sovereignty and eternal nature there are other determining and fundamental characteristics of God which can be reasoned from His eternal nature. That is, we have already stated that the doctrine of predestination (the eternal purposes and decrees of God) is based on the eternity and sovereignty of God, so now we wish

to show how not only the purposes and decrees of God are related to His eternity, but also other attributes and divine characteristics are also related. We do not think that the sovereignty and eternity of God are alone the proper sources for the establishing of theological truth. There are revealed to us more of the nature and character of God than of His eternity and sovereignty. This should be considered in the study of any theological subject, but inasmuch as we are studying predestination as springing from the eternity and sovereignty of God we rightfully should seek to understand what the eternity and sovereignty of God implies or teaches. At present we are thinking of the eternity of God in its relation to what God is.

The eternity of God reasons for every moral and natural attribute and power that, lying within the nature of the Godhead, makes God what He was, what He is, and what He ever will be. If it be true that the doctrine of predestination can be reasoned from the eternal nature of God so also can other doctrines be traced back to that same eternal nature. And not only so but these other truths which spring from the eternal nature of God have a relationship to predestination which help to establish clearly what the true teaching of predestination really is.

It is through processes of reasoning applied to one truth that another truth is found. It may be awkward thinking which seeks to establish one characteristic of divinity on the revelation of another one. That is, to reason that if one characteristic is proved then another must be a natural and inevitable coexistent sequence, but nevertheless it is true that none of the characteristics of divinity can remain without all the other divine accompaniments. We cannot have almighty power without infinite wisdom, for infinite wisdom is essential to infinite power. We cannot have infinite justice without in-

finite love, mercy and power. We cannot have infinite love without infinite knowledge and superintendence or providence. And so we might continue to show the relation of every attribute of God to every other within the Godhead. What we wish

to emphasize now is the fact that God cannot be eternal in His nature and not be absolutely holy, and *the holiness of God determines the exercise of His sovereignty* and consequently determines the true doctrine of predestination.

EXPOSITORY

EXPOSITORY MESSAGES ON CHRISTIAN PURITY

OLIVE M. WINCHESTER

Pure Religion

PURE religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1: 27).

From the beginning of the human race on the earth there has been some form of religion; in fact it would seem that there is no tribe or race without religion. While this has been disputed, yet it would seem to have good grounds for belief.

Naturally in the great number of religions there is great variety. Not only does variety exist in the varying number of heathen religions, but likewise among the advocates of the Christian religion. Thus it is that the question arises over and over again as to what is the nature of the true religion.

The Bible does not give us many definitions of religion; it states its qualities and attributes in specifying the characteristics of its followers, but when it comes to definite statements of the nature of religion put in the form of terse pragmatic utterance, we have practically only two, one in Micah in the Old Testament and one in James in the New which tells that "Pure religion and undefiled before

God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

PURE RELIGION TWOFOLD

Throughout the Scripture it is evident that religion has a twofold aspect, but often man has forgotten this. In the Ten Commandments we have first delineated duties toward God and then follow duties toward man. When Jesus summed up the great essentials in religious living we have the exhortation to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength which is followed by the admonition to love our neighbor as ourselves.

It would seem that thus it was plain, but how often has man emphasized one phase of Christian living to the exclusion of the other. In consequence we have the forms of personal religion which seem to have lost sight of the duties to man. The extreme forms of mysticism sometimes have fallen into this error. The thought of the individual has been filled with his experiences of God, a thought most essential, yea fundamentally essential, but he has so lost himself that he has forgotten the poor and needy about him.

Then, on the other hand, there is the person who has caught the vision of social service. He has heard the cries coming from oppressed humanity, bound by

injustice and servitude; to him the whole of religion consists in caring for the needs of his fellowman. If his service to his fellowman included the preparation of that soul to enter into a personal fellowship with God thus meeting the needs of the spiritual nature, then the service would not seem to be so far from the truth, but those caught by this presentation of religious truth are concerned primarily with the temporal needs of man. They seek not to fit man to become reconciled to his God, or if they do include this thought, it is secondary rather than primary, but they seek for him social justice. That there is need of social justice we admit, but that this is the gospel of salvation we deny. The social gospel is not the gospel in its fullness, in fact it neglects the real dynamic of the gospel.

While there are these extreme positions that have been taken by some in the history of religion, yet at the same time the fact remains that religion is twofold; it includes a personal relationship to God and also service to our fellowman. If we are to have religion in its fullness, we must have both of these phases.

RELIGION EXPRESSED IN CHRISTIAN SERVICE

In this particular passage we have the thought of service put first; more often that of personal relationship to God is put first. But our passage is found in the Epistle of James, and one of the characteristics of this epistle is the emphasis upon works as an expression of the salvation in our hearts. James does not present works as the method of obtaining salvation, but as the expression of salvation. He is not dealing with the obtaining the experiences of salvation, but how one is to keep those experiences after they have been received.

In noting the class of works indicated here, we see that they are ministries of mercy or benevolence. They no doubt stand for the whole class of such phases

of Christian service. Works of social justice belong to the realm of the moral man, and when he becomes a Christian, he not only observes social justice, but he adds to that works of benevolence. Consequently we see that the social gospel, standing by itself alone, touches only the realm of moral living. If one claims this as basis for Christian living he has not risen yet to true Christian love.

On the other hand, if one claims a Christian experience and fails to walk in keeping with the principles of social justice, there is a default somewhere; Christian love should always quicken moral principles and never does it compensate for delinquencies along this line. It may be that in some cases the default is in the understanding, and again it may be in the nature of the experience received. At times people's adherence to religion is more of an intellectual assent than a transformation of the nature. But at times the nature has been transformed, but the judgment of what is right is very deficient. Thus it can be from several causes that a true conception of the justice due our fellowman may be perverted. Yet whatever may be the case the question of social justice belongs to the realm of the moral, primarily, rather than to the realm of the spiritual.

The necessity that the love of Christ in the heart finds expression in works of benevolence to those in need around about is a truth that James especially stressed. We find him in the second chapter of this epistle exhorting that faith should show its validity by finding expression in works. He inquires what profit may result if a brother should have need and we simply tell him to depart and be warmed and fed, if we do not give him the things that he needs. Then he concludes that this illustrates the nature of faith without works; it is futile if it does not call forth expression.

The care of the poor has ever been emphasized as the duty of those who wor-

ship the God of Israel and the God of the Christians, from the earliest days. In the Mosaic times we find the command that the gleanings of the vineyard and the corners of the wheat field were to be left for the poor.

The patriarch Job in the chapter which is sometimes called his "Oath of clearance," that is, where he protests his integrity, asserts:

"If I have withheld the poor from their desire,
Or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail,
Or have eaten my morsel alone,
And the fatherless hath not eaten thereof. . . .

"If I have seen any perish for want of clothing,
Or that the needy had no covering;
If his loins have not blessed me,
And if he hath not been warmed with the
fleece of my sheep;

"If I have lifted up my hand against the father-
less,
Because I saw my help in the gate:
Then let my shoulder fall from the shoulder
blade,
And my arm be broken from the bone."
(Job 31: 16-22, R.V.)

This same note of the importance of the care for the poor runs through the Psalms and appears also in Proverbs. Since this thought occupied so important a place in Old Testament teaching, it is quite probable that James carried this into his ideal of a New Testament Christian, not simply from a personal predilection but through the inspiration that spoke both in the Old Testament and the New.

UNSPOTTED FROM THE WORLD

Passing from the expression in outward acts of religion, James comes to the inner condition of the heart. We note in both cases those of the outward acts and the admonition to keep oneself unspotted from the world that the tense is present and thereby we have the fact that this is to be a continual process. This does not argue that the process of unspotted con-

dition is not preceded by an act; in fact the reverse would be true, because we cannot keep an object or inner being clean until once it has been made clean. James here as elsewhere is not dealing with the receiving of salvation, but the maintaining of that condition after it is received. There must be the cleansing of the heart, but this work will soon lose its efficacy if the heart is not continually kept in that pure and unspotted condition.

We might ask ourselves what is the world from which we are to keep ourselves? We think of the world in the sense of this material cosmos, and we think of the world in a religious sense thereby designating certain tendencies which we recognize are not conducive to spiritual living. The first definition of the world we would not feel would have reference to our present thought, but the second we might be more inclined to accept, but still we feel that there is an inadequacy in it. One writer has defined the world in the sense in which it is applicable here as the "self-pleasing sphere." This seems to us to be the thought.

There are two centers around which the heart and inner life of man build, one is the self and the other is God. While at times there may be creature loves which are unselfish, yet after all when they are traced to their original motives and their contents thoroughly analyzed, it appears that the radiating center is self. That this self life may be destroyed and the soul find its center in God takes a radical transformation; this only comes to pass with the death, full and complete, to the old self life or the "old man" as stated in the Epistle to the Romans.

Therefore in keeping oneself unspotted from the world, there is need that all self-seeking be eliminated. Defining undefiled religion then the writer to whom we have already referred says, "Pure or clear through, undefiled or unstained with self-seeking." Then he goes on to say that

our supreme danger in the religious life is willingly cherishing mixed motives. Again someone has defined undefiled religion as that in which there is no strain of insincerity. This allies with the foregoing statement of mixed motives.

To keep ourselves unspotted from the world then would mean that we should always guard ourselves from any self-seeking. How easy it is in our work for the kingdom of God to let some strain of self-seeking come in and mar the purity of motive! How often do we rationalize ourselves into some position which has underlying some objective that is diverted by human desire! How much of prayer and waiting upon the Lord does it take to keep from entering into the heart all the clamoring desires that lurk so near its door? Yet if we are to keep ourselves pure, this must be done.

When we conclude our examination of

this definition of religion that James, the brother of our Lord, has given us, we find that he has chosen the two most fundamental points. That the inner being of man be pure and be kept pure is the great essential, that he have no other center but Christ and Christ in God gives true religion and is fundamentally essential to true religion. But with this inner purging of his being there goes forth a love for his fellowman which can be expressed only in deeds of lovingkindness and acts of benevolence.

Thus we have a well-balanced Christian; he does not lose himself alone in the mystic joy of an inner life but sends this forth in outward expression, neither does he give himself entirely to works and forget the personal aspect of his religious life. If we can keep this ideal ever before us, then will we live acceptable lives before the Lord our God.

HOMILETICAL

PRAYERMEETING SUGGESTIONS

LEWIS T. CORLETT

The Bible as a Mirror

A mirror reflects the true character of things; so the Bible is a mirror of both man and God, sin and holiness, earth and heaven.

I. THE BIBLE REFLECTS THE TRUE CHARACTER OF MAN

1. His heart (Jer. 17: 9; Matt. 15: 10).
2. His mind (Rom. 8: 7).
3. His life (Eph. 2: 1-3).
4. His hope (Eph. 2: 12).

II. THE BIBLE REFLECTS THE GREAT LOVE OF GOD

1. His general love (John 3: 16).
2. His special love (Eph. 5: 25).
3. His personal love (Gal. 2: 20).
4. His undying love (Jer. 31: 3).

III. THE BIBLE REFLECTS THE GRACE AND GLORY OF CHRIST

1. His spotless character (1 Peter 1: 19).

2. His perfect work (Heb. 10: 12-14).
3. His personal glory (John 17: 5).
4. His saving power (Heb. 7: 25).—SELECTED.

Choosing God or Gods

(Joshua 24: 1-28)

1. Entreating Their Choice (vs. 1-14).
2. Challenging Their Choice (v. 15).
3. Securing Their Choice (vs. 16-18).
4. Fortifying Their Choice (vs. 19-24).
5. Binding Their Choice (vs. 25-28).—SELECTED.

Models in 1 Thessalonians

I. THE MODEL CHURCH (ch. 1).

1. Its service (vs. 1-5).
2. Its faith in the Word (vs. 6-9).
3. Its hope (v. 10).

II. THE MODEL MINISTER (ch. 2).

1. Fearless and guileless (vs. 1-3).
2. Pleasing to God (vs. 4-6).
3. Gentle and affectionate (vs. 7, 8).
4. Holy and fatherly (vs. 9-11).
5. His crown of rejoicing (vs. 12-20).

III. THE MODEL BROTHER (ch. 3).

1. Concern for the faith of the brethren (vs. 1-4).
2. Effort in behalf of their faith (vs. 5).
3. Comforted in their faith (vs. 6-8).
4. Praying for the faith of the brethren (v. 9).

IV. THE MODEL WALK OF THE BELIEVERS (chs. 4, 5).

1. Walk in holiness (4: 1-8).
2. Walk in love (4: 9, 10).
3. Walk in honesty (4: 11, 12).
4. End of the walk—Rapture of Church (4: 13: 18).
5. Sudden termination of the walk (5: 1-11).
6. Injunctions (5: 12-23).
7. Conclusion (5: 24-28).—SELECTED.

Habits Worth Forming

1. Habit of Church-going (Luke 4: 16).
2. Habit of Daily Prayer (Daniel 6: 10).
3. Habit of High Thinking (Col. 3: 1-4).
4. Habit of Good Will (Col. 3: 12-17).
5. Habit of Trusting God (Matt. 6: 24-34).
6. Habit of Peaceful Life (Rom. 14: 16-19).

—SELECTED.

Jesus Was Able

1. To wait for results patiently. The thirty silent years (Luke 2: 40-52; John 2: 22; John 13: 7, 19).
2. To withstand temptations triumphantly (Matt. 4: 1-11; Heb. 4: 15; John 6: 15).
3. To sympathize deeply. Note, "He had compassion" in (Matt. 8: 35, 36; Luke 7: 12-15) and so on.
4. To help efficiently. "He went about doing good" (Acts 10: 38). Read Mark 1: 32-34. His whole life was effective helpfulness. What was the secret?
5. To treat all races fairly. A Jew himself, He yet treated all races fairly (Matt. 8: 5-13; John 4: 1-42; Matt. 15: 21-28).
6. To teach helpfully (Matthew 13 as an example; Matthew 5-7 also).
7. To suffer calmly (Matt. 27: 11-14; Matt. 26: 57-68).
8. To pray effectively (Luke 5: 12-18; John 11: 41, 42; Luke 11: 1-13).
9. To keep pure constantly (study John 14: 30; Matthew 5: 8).
10. To be God's Son triumphantly (John 14: 10, 11; Matt. 3: 16; Matt. 12: 28).

—SELECTED.

The Heart of the Gospel

(Colossians 1: 19-21)

1. Proclamation of Christ's Death. "Proclaimed Peace."
2. Explanation of Christ's Sacrifice. "Making peace."
3. Attestation of God's Approval. "It pleased the Father."
4. Consummation of Love's Design. "To reconcile all."
5. Evangelization of Sin's Captives. "Enemies."

—SELECTED.

Christ Dwelling in His Children

The Christ life indwelling (Col. 1: 27).

The Christ life impelling (Rom. 6: 4).

The Christ life inexhaustible (Heb. 7: 16).

The Christ life inspiring (Gal. 5: 6).

The Christ life invigorating (2 Cor. 13: 4).

—SELECTED.

The Pre-eminence of Christ

(Colossians 1)

1. Matchless Redeemer of His People (v. 14).
2. Majestic Revealer of His Father (v. 15).
3. Mighty Exhibitor of His Power (v. 16).
4. Magnetic Upholder of All Things (v. 17).
5. Magnificent Representation of Grace (vs. 18, 19).
6. Merciful Reconciler of All (v. 20).
7. Marvelous Sanctifier of the Redeemed (vs. 22, 28, 29).—SELECTED.

Seven Steps in Salvation

(Colossians 2)

1. "Received Christ" (v. 6).—Our Salvation.
2. "Walk ye in him" (v. 6).—Our Separation.
3. "Rooted in him" (v. 7).—Our Foundation.
4. "Built up in him" (v. 7).—Our Continuation.
5. "Complete in him" (v. 10).—Our Perfection.
6. "Buried with him" (v. 12).—Our Confession.
7. "Risen with him" (v. 12).—Our Position.

—SELECTED.

Prayer a Personal Duty

The Possibilities of Prayer

The Direction of Prayer

The Burden of Prayer

The Accomplishments of Prayer.—SELECTED.

Some Facts Worth Knowing About the Scriptures

1. It Is Possible for Every Christian to Become Mighty in the Scriptures.

2. It Is Possible to Get Life's Truest Wisdom Only in the Scriptures.
3. It Is Possible to Err if One Does Not Know the Scriptures.
4. It Is Possible to Twist a Wrong Meaning From the Scriptures.
5. It Is Possible to Find Abiding Confidence Nowhere Apart From the Scriptures.

—SELECTED.

Paul's Positive Pronouncement in Philippians

Four

1. "I beseech"—of agreement (v. 2).
2. "I entreat"—of encouragement (v. 3).
3. "I know"—of contentment (v. 12).
4. "I can"—of faithfulness (v. 13).
5. "I desire"—of fruit-bearing (v. 17).

6. "I have"—of abundance (v. 18).
7. "I am"—of fullness (v. 18).—SELECTED.

Reasons for Steadfastness in Philippians Four

1. Prayer (v. 6) "In everything by prayer."
2. Praise (v. 8) "If there be any praise, think."
3. Peace (v. 9) "And the God of peace shall keep."
4. Power (v. 13) "All things through Christ."
5. Provision (v. 19) "God shall supply all your need."—SELECTED.

The Mind of Christ—Philippians Two

1. A Virtuous Commendation (v. 5).
2. A Voluntary Humiliation (vs. 6-9).
3. A Vicarious Manifestation (v. 8).
4. A Victorious Exaltation (v. 9).
5. A Vital Declaration (v. 11).—SELECTED.

PRACTICAL

EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY

BASIL MILLER

CHAPTER SIX—THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Genuineness and Authenticity Continued

2. *Evidence from the quotations of the early fathers.* Another method by which we can prove the New Testament books to have been accepted by the contemporaries of the apostles as genuine is by the quotations of the books found in the writings of the early fathers of the Church. These quotations usually divide themselves into three classes: Quotations in which the references to the books, chapters and verses are given; those in which the references to the books and the writers are not given, but which are direct quotations from some New Testament book; and finally those in which a figure of speech, a type, a form of expression, or an idea are borrowed, but due credit is not given to the original writer.

The direct quotations given in the writings of the authors mentioned above

such as Origen, Tertullian and Clement are so numerous that many say should the New Testament be lost, it would be possible to entirely reconstruct it from the quotations of these men. Hence we shall pass over these quotations of the writers already treated and shall begin with the age where their references to the books leave off, and shall span the intervening years between their days and those of the apostles with the quotations from the New Testament used by the several writers.

(1). *Irenæus*, A.D. 135-200. Irenæus has left so many quotations from and references to the books of the New Testament that he might be said to have left a catalog of the books. In his writings he speaks of having seen Polycarp, the disciple of John, in his youth. In 177 he was made Bishop of Lyons; he also traveled in Rome and visited the churches there. Of Polycarp he writes:

"Polycarp was not only instructed by the apostle, and conversed with many who

had seen Christ, but was also by apostles appointed bishop of the church in Smyrna, whom I also saw in my early youth, for he tarried a very long time, and when an old man, gloriously and most nobly suffered martyrdom, departed life having always taught the things which he had learned from the apostles and which the Church has handed down and which alone are true."¹

He states that what the apostles first preached was "Handed down to us in the Scriptures"; and that they were filled with the Holy Ghost; that "Matthew issued a written Gospel"; that "Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, wrote what had been preached by Peter"; that "Luke, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the Gospel preached by him"; and that "John, the disciple who had leaned on the Lord's breast, published a Gospel during his residence in Ephesus."

"We have learned from none other," he writes, "the plan of our salvation than from those from whom the gospel has come down to us, which they did at one time proclaim in public; and at a later period, by the will of God, handed down to us in the Scriptures, to be the ground and pillar of our faith. . . . For after our Lord arose from the dead, the apostles were invested with power from on high, when the Holy Ghost came down, were filled with all His gifts and had perfect knowledge. . . . Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews, in their own dialect; while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome and were laying the foundations of the Church. After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter. Luke also, the companion of Paul, did record in a Book the Gospel preached by him. Afterward, John the disciple of the Lord, who had leaned upon

His breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence in Ephesus."²

He makes many quotations from Acts and repeatedly speaks of it as the work of Luke. "Simon, the Samaritan, was that magician of whom Luke says, 'But there was a certain man, Simon by name, who before times used magical arts in the city, and led away the people of Samaria, declaring that he himself was some great man, from the least to the greatest.'"³ But again we allege the same heresies against those who do not recognize Paul as an apostle; that they should either reject the other works of the Gospel which we have that come down to us through Luke; or else, if they do not receive all these they must also admit that testimony concerning Paul when he tells us that the Lord spoke at first to him from heaven; 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? I am Jesus whom thou persecutest,' and then to Ananias regarding him, 'Go thy way for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name among the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.'"⁴

He also quotes twelve of Paul's Epistles, some of them many times, and the authorship is ascribed to Paul. He does not quote Philemon or Hebrews. Eusebius gives a list of some of his books, which are now lost, in which he mentions Hebrews. Hence he writes of all the books with the exception of the small one of Philemon.⁵

Irenæus quotes by name 1 Peter and 1 and 2 John. He neither mentions nor quotes 3 John, James and Jude. A quotation from the third class he makes from 2 Peter in which he states, "that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years."⁶

² *Ibid.*, III, 1.

³ *Ibid.*, I, 23, 1.

⁴ *Ibid.*, III, 15.

⁵ For exact quotation see Lardner, *op. cit.* III, 163, 64.

⁶ Exact quotations appear in McGarvey, *op. cit.* 87-8.

¹ Irenæus, *Against Heresies*, 262, 63.

In numerous places he quotes the Apocalypse and ascribes its authorship to John, saying that it was written approximately "toward the end of Domitian's reign." Thus he quotes from all the books of the New Testament except Philemon, Jude, 3 John and James.

The opportunities of Irenæus were the very best. Pothinus, who was the bishop of Irenæus, was thirteen years of age when John died, and he must have been certain whether any of the books came into existence as spurious works of the apostles during his life. Of Pothinus, Irenæus learned the facts concerning the New Testament and the Church. He spoke with Polycarp, who had conversed with the apostles and with those who had seen Jesus. Thus from his boyhood, he possessed the greatest opportunities of learning about the origin of Christianity, and about the New Testament.

His respect for the Bible was most supreme. He often termed it, "The Sacred Scriptures," "The Oracles of God." He speaks of the New Testament as containing "The writings of the evangelists and the apostles." Irenæus held the Scriptures to be perfect, since they were spoken by the Word of God, and by His Spirit. He says that no light punishment shall await those who shall add to, or subtract from, the Bible. "Is it possible," writes McGarvey, "that books thus esteemed in the middle of the second century and believed to have been of use in the Church in the days of the apostles could have been written but a few years previous?"¹

(2). *Justin Martyr*. c 146. We next produce the testimony of Justin Martyr who was born near the beginning of the second century, or but a few years after the death of John. His writings that have come down to us are two, "Apologies" and a "Dialogue With Trypho," in which he presents the arguments of Christianity

against the Jews. This was written about the year 146 A.D. At Rome he finally suffered martyrdom. Of him Eusebius says, "He was the most noted that flourished in those times."

From the Gospels he makes about one hundred and twenty quotations concerning Jesus; nowhere does he mention the names of the authors; for to an unbelieving Jew or to a heathen they would mean nothing. To the Gospels he constantly refers as the source of his information, inspiration and his writings, and as the only true authority in the Christian religion. Often these are designated by such titles as "The Gospel," "The memoirs of the apostles," "The memoirs composed by the apostles which are called the Gospels," "The memoirs which were drawn up by His apostles and those who followed them." Sixteen such instances appear in his works. The following are samples of these: "On the day called Sunday the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, so long as time permits." "But also in the Gospel it is written." "We find it recorded in the memoirs of His apostles."²

The conclusion drawn from his use of the Gospels is that since it is given by a man who lived only a few years after the death of John; and since he must have been well acquainted with the history of the Church up to his time, there can be no doubt that the Gospels must have been written by their supposed writers, and that the facts presented therein are true.

The same writer also quotes indirectly from Romans, Corinthians, 2 Thessalonians, Colossians and Hebrews. He appears to have quoted from 2 Peter, but this is doubtful.

(3). *Papias*. Papias was an overseer of the church at Hierapolis, the last home and burial place of the Apostle Philip, and of two of his daughters. This church is mentioned by Paul in Colossians 4: 13.

¹ McGarvey, *op. cit.* 90.

² Quoted from McGarvey, *Ibid.* 94.

Papias was the author of five books entitled *An Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord*, quoted and used by Eusebius. Eusebius states that Papias conversed with the daughters of Philip. He writes, "But we now show how Papias received a wonderful account from the daughters of Philip."¹ Irenæus says that he was a companion of Polycarp: "These things are borne witness to by Papias, the hearer of John and the companion of Polycarp."² He himself declares that he had conversed with many followers of the apostles; that of them he had inquired what the apostles had taught, and that he had derived more benefit in writing his expositions from the living voices of such persons than from all books:

"But I shall not regret to subjoin to my interpretation also yours for your benefit, whatever I have at any time ascertained and treasured up in my memory as I have received it from the elders, I have received it in order to give additional confirmation to the truth of my testimony. For I have never, like many, delighted to hear those tell many things, but those that teach the truth; neither those that record foreign precepts; but those that are given from the Lord to our faith, and that come from the truth itself. But if I meet with one who has been a follower of the elders anywhere, I make it a point to inquire what were the declarations of the elders. What was said by Andrew, Peter and Philip. What by Thomas, James, John, Matthew, or any other of the disciples of the Lord; for I do not think that I derive so much benefit from books as from the living voices of those who are surviving."³

These statements show that he dwelt with that generation which had lived when the apostles were laboring on earth,

1 Eusebius, *op. cit.* III. 39.

2 Irenæus, *Heresies*, V. 33.

3 Quoted by Eusebius, *op. cit.* III. 39.

and that he was intimately acquainted with them and their associates. Of Matthew he makes the statement, "Matthew composed the oracles in the Hebrew dialect, and everyone translated it as he is able."⁴ Of the Gospel of Mark he writes, "And John the presbyter also said this, 'Mark being the interpreter of Peter, whatsoever he recorded he wrote with accuracy, in the order in which it was spoken or done by the Lord; he was in company with Peter, who gave him such instructions as were necessary, but not to give a history of the Lord's discourses. Wherefore Mark had not erred in anything by writing something as he recorded them; for he was carefully attentive to one thing, not to pass by anything he heard, or to state anything falsely in these accounts.'⁵"

Concerning the Gospel of John, he makes no statement in any of his extant writings, but appended to an old Latin manuscript copied in the ninth century is the following: "The Gospel of John was published and given to the churches by John while yet in the body. So related Papias . . . in the last five of his books. He has rightly described the Gospel as being composed by John."⁶ He also mentions 1 John, 1 Peter and the Apocalypse. Andrew of Cæsarea, a Greek writer of the fifth century, states that he bore testimony to the Apocalypse. Westcott quotes this writer as saying, "With regard to the inspiration, we deem it superfluous to add another word; for the blessed Gregory Theologus and Cyril and some of still older date . . . Papias . . . bore entirely satisfactory testimony to it."⁷

(4). *Polycarp. d* 155 or 156. "Polycarp of Smyrna is one of the most conspicuous characters of the Church in the

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*

6 Westcott, *Canon of the New Testament*, 76, n 1.

7 *Ibid.*, 443.

second century. Irenæus, who when a boy was personally acquainted with him, says of him, 'That he was instructed by the apostles'; 'that he had conversed with many who had seen Christ'; 'that he was appointed an overseer of the church in Smyrna by apostles'; 'that he lived to be a very old man' and 'that he suffered a glorious martyrdom.' 'To these things,' adds Irenæus, 'all the Asiatic churches testify, as do all those who have succeeded Polycarp down to the present.'"¹

His martyrdom occurred February 23, 155 or 156 A.D. He is represented by an account in the name of the church that he served as serving the Lord eighty-six years. "Then the proconsul urging him saying, 'Swear and I will set thee at liberty; reproach Christ.' Polycarp declared, 'Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me an injury, how then can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?'"² If this be true then the date of his conversion and baptism would be 70 A.D., or about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. If, as Irenæus says, he died at one hundred years of age, then he was fourteen when Paul was beheaded in 68 A.D. It is possible that he saw this apostle. After his baptism he was for thirty years a contemporary of John. It is not doubtful that he knew Philip well, since his home was at Hierapolis, one hundred miles east of Smyrna. It must then be true that he was instructed by the apostles. The books he recognized as from the pen of the apostles must have been written by them. Polycarp wrote a number of epistles to a neighboring church, one of which remains for our perusal, that to the Philippians. In this he makes a reference to the epistle of Paul addressed to the same church, and he exhorts the brethren to observe it.

Referring to Paul he declares, "Neither

I, nor any other such one, can come up to the wisdom of the blessed and glorified Paul. He when among you accurately and steadfastly taught the word of truth in the presence of those who were then alive. And when absent from you he wrote you a letter, which if you are careful to read, you will find it to be a means of building you up in the faith, which has been given you and which being followed in hope, and preceded by love toward God and Christ, is mother of us all." In the first chapter of his epistle to the Philippians, he quotes Paul's Epistle bearing the same name, Acts, 1 Peter and Ephesians. In other places he quotes the first three Gospels, 1 John, and all of Paul's epistles except Philemon and Titus. Hence the genuineness of these books is well supported by this writer, living during the last of the apostolic days.

(5). *The epistle of Barnabas* is a most valuable work of evidence as to the origin of Christianity, and as to the genuineness of the New Testament. It was written after the destruction of Jerusalem and long before the days of Clement of Alexandria. Most competent critics assign it to the first quarter of the second century. In introducing the work, the statement from Matthew appears often, "It is written."

(6) *The epistle of Clement of Rome* is prized by the Church more than any writing from an uninspired author. As Clement died in 101 A.D. the epistle was written before this time, supposedly during the persecution of Domitian, A.D. 93, during which time the Apostle John was living. Clement was then bishop of Rome, and in all probability he lived during the period of all the apostolic writings. Thus he had the best means for knowing the apostles and their writings; all that he quotes is undoubtedly from the pens of these writers. He makes reference to 1 Corinthians when he says to the Corin-

1 McGarvey, *op. cit.* 102.

2 *Ante-Nicene Library*, V. 1.

thians, "Take up the epistles of that blessed Apostle Paul. . . . Truly under the inspiration of the Spirit he wrote to you concerning himself, Cephas and Apollos, because even then parties had been formed among you."¹ This is a direct reference to 1 Cor. 1. If Paul had not written that epistle, Clement who had lived during the age of Paul would never have thus referred to the epistle.

In another case he combined texts from Matthew and Luke, when he wrote, "Being especially mindful of the words of the Lord Jesus which he spoke, teaching us meekness and long suffering. For he thus spoke, Be ye merciful that ye may obtain mercy (Matt. 5: 7); forgive that it may be forgiven you (Luke 6: 37)."²

Again he combines passages from Ephesians, Romans, Matthew, Mark and Luke, thus: "Have ye not all one God and one Christ. . . . And have ye not one calling in Christ? (Eph. 4: 4-6). Why do ye divide and tear in pieces the members of Christ, and raise up strife against your own body and have reached such a height of madness as to forget that we are members of one another? (Rom. 12: 5). . . . Woe to that man by whom offences come (Matt. 18: 7)."³ He also quotes 1 Peter, Timothy, Titus, Hebrews and possibly 2 Peter: in all five epistles of Paul, including Hebrews, the first three Gospels, 1 and possibly 2 Peter.

(7). *Summary of evidence from quotations.* "By this source of evidence," writes Dr. McGarvey, "we have traced every book of the New Testament back to the apostolic age, except Philemon, 2 and 3 John, Jude, James and possibly 2 Peter. From the last (2 Peter) we have found three probable quotations (Irenæus, Justin and Clement); from 2 John one (that of Irenæus). . . . We have traced the first

three Gospels all the way to Clement"—who lived during the lives of Paul, Philip and John—"and the fourth to Papias. We have traced Peter's first epistle to Clement. . . . Acts and all of Paul's epistles back to Polycarp, and five of the latter back to Clement. . . . That of James is quoted by none as early as Irenæus. Finally we have traced John's first epistle back to Polycarp and the Apocalypse to Papias."⁴

This evidence derived from the quotations of the different books is more highly appreciated in comparison to the quotations made from the classical writings of antiquity. In the first century after the death of Herodotus, he is quoted by one writer; by one in the second and by none in the third. Yet none doubts the historicity of his works, nor is his genuineness questioned.

Ancient manuscripts and versions carry us with assurance to the fourth and second centuries respectively, while quotations from most of the books of the New Testament appear during the lives of the apostles, and at most a very few years after the death of John. Should these books have been spurious, written but a few years before the age of the early fathers, it is beyond question that they would have recognized the farce and rejected the works as authentic and genuine. Had any spurious writings, purporting to have been composed just one century before the age of the fathers and in cases during the period of their lives, have been accepted as genuine, the works of their reputed authors, it would cast a serious cloud over the mentality of the fathers of the Church. The historicity of the books of the New Testament is as well assured as that of any work written either in the present or in past ages. Christianity as it exists today, has so existed from the age of its founder, Jesus Christ.

⁴ McGarvey, *op. cit.* 101.

¹ *Epistle*, chapter 48.

² *Ibid.*, Chapter 13.

³ *Ibid.*, Chapter 46.

EVILS OF SHALLOW THINKING

J. G. TAYLORSON

THE present world crisis has forced upon the people of our time a most difficult situation. Customs and traditions are losing their sway. Nothing is accepted merely because of its age. Venerable beliefs in science, politics, education, and most certainly in religion, are being questioned. Discoveries and inventions are being made with marvelous rapidity in many fields. There is a flood of new opinions and beliefs, many of which seem to contradict one another. How shall we be able to select right from wrong—the useful from the useless? What shall we do to save ourselves from confusion? We live not only in the age of greatest opportunity, but in the age of sincere thinking. Thus one of the greatest evils of shallow thinking is that it fails to meet the age in which we live. People are confused and it is the duty of the Christian people, and especially of the clergy to lead them out of this confusion.

Some time ago I heard a public speaker, addressing ministers, make the following statement, "People do not come just to hear you preach." This is only partly true. The fact is that if we are to build up our congregations we are going to be compelled to give the people something worth their hearing. Generally speaking, our people are more intelligent than we give them credit for being. I recently attended the graduating exercises of an eighth grade class in San Francisco; as I left, my problem was not how could I adjust myself to the child's mind, but how long would the child tolerate me? Personally, I contend that the clergy must adapt its thought to fit the most intelligent mind in the congregation, but at the same time this thought must be conveyed in words suitable to the child as well as being agreeable to the most intelligent mind. Christ was the deepest thinker of

all time; He gave the most profound thoughts, using the simplest words in the shortest period of time. Generally, a lengthy sermon is not as well prepared as a short one; it is not how much we say, but what we say. At times I fear the clergy have left the impression that they were doing the people a favor by delivering to them a discourse; usually the favor is on the part of the people in listening to us. The greatest privilege that ever comes to the minister of the gospel is to have a group of people, his congregation, give him their time while he talks to them. Then one outstanding evil of shallow thinking would be to stand before that group unprepared. People are not forced to come to church these days. The competing forces are great, and if we desire to be effective in the work of the kingdom we shall have to lay aside all shallow thinking and give the people something that will cause them to feel that their time has been well spent. Someone objects, "Keep the fires burning, and folks will come to get warmed"; that depends upon what is meant by "fire." If it is that spirit of cheap sensation which is only a peculiar way of parading before the people to cover the lack of deep devotion, I say, "No!" The meeting that possessed the greatest intensity of fire that I know of was Pentecost. Yes, and read the sermon of Pentecost—was it the product of shallow thinking? I am not pleading for a cold, intellectual ministry, but I am pleading for a more devoted ministry of the mind, and the fulfillment of "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," and the studying to "shew thyself approved unto God—a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." The other day a lady said to me, "Why do so many preachers preach the same old sermons that they have for years?" You answer. May I suggest shallow thinking? Let us remember that while the man in the gut-

ter needs Christ, so too does the university president.

Let me mention some of the ways in which shallow thinking finds expression. The shallow thinker is likely to find himself in a mass of details without the ability to secure order. He will lose the ability to properly judge values, and to arrive at the correct solution by holding in mind for a considerable time the mass of facts, until he is able to sift them and reach the answer. He will find his powers of concentration becoming dull, which might result in a busy life—very busy—but busy with what? Shallow thinking often results in a false egoism, which is characterized by the familiar phrase, "I am just too hot for them, or too straight." The fact is that people today appreciate a message which reveals sin, and marks evil in no uncertain terms, but they desire it to be presented in a manner suited to their intelligence. The following is an illustration of how this works: An evangelist made the following statement during the preaching hour, "A skunk and a tobacco user are twin brothers." In his congregation sat a prominent business man, a smoker, who had come after much persuasion on the behalf of his friend, a loyal member of the church. He was justly offended, and refused to come again. The churchman asked the evangelist to apologize. His apology was, "Last night I referred to the skunk and the tobacco user as one. I have been asked to apologize, and gladly do so. My apology is to the skunk." Very smart, and perhaps "hot," but extremely shallow. Perhaps as he sits at home wondering why folks don't call him for a real old-fashioned revival, and bemoaning the days of real revivals that we "used to have," we should feel sorry for him, for there is a picture of shallow thinking. A safe rule for a preacher is, never knowingly insult the intelligence of your congregation. We should so conduct ourselves that any member of our church might feel perfectly com-

fortable when he brings his most intelligent friend to our service. Sincerity does not excuse shallow thinking or smart, rude, chaffy and light remarks. Let us keep ever in mind that we are representing our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

Shallow thinking may often result in action without thought, which is as serious as thought without action. Again, it might result in generalizing particulars. How often have we heard it said, "Well, I gave them the truth, anyway." Perhaps a good question to think over is, when is the truth not the truth? A sea captain wrote in his log book, "The mate was drunk today." The mate begged for mercy and reconsideration, pleading that it was a first offense, but might result in his discharge. The captain refused, insisting that he must tell the truth. The following week, the mate kept the log. He wrote, "The captain was sober today," he told the truth. Once more shallow thinking is evidenced by a concern for the reward, above that for the task in hand. Some love to sing, "I'm Going Higher Some Day," but seldom does their religion become operative in aiding someone else. Another outstanding evil of shallow thought is an attempt to cover lack of clear thought by wordiness, ponderous and involved phraseology which is unintelligible to the audience. Many so-called "deep" sermons are deep in the quagmire of muddy content. A lot is said but not much to the point—"much ado about nothing."

One man when called to preach may not be as well prepared as another; in that there is no sin, but to remain unprepared is fatal. I have a friend who did not complete grade school, but who is a very intellectual man, simply because he took his calling seriously. He possesses more common sense than many men with university degrees. There is a vast difference between depending upon what we are supposed to know, and realizing what we do not know and determining to learn

it. Paul was not used for what he was, but for what he was willing to become. Our own Uncle Buddie is an intellectual man—not the result of a gift, but the result of hard work and hours of preparation, plus steady development.

If we do not grow with the times in which we live, the times will outgrow us and leave us behind. Therefore a minister must be widely read. It was a cold winter for Paul, so he wrote to Timothy to bring his cloak and books, beseeching him that should he be unable to bring both, to be sure to bring the books. Many a pastor cannot afford to buy new books. I know of no better contribution a church could make than to provide an adequate reading fund each month for its pastor. It is not wise nor profitable to confine one's reading to that which may be readily understood. One should develop his thinking by attacking more difficult subject matter. It is often found helpful to read from authors with whom you do not agree, in order to develop powers of discrimination.

The other day I chanced upon six rules for progress, and six rules insuring stagnation. Because of the close relationship between these rules and the title of this paper, I have reproduced them here, with a few minor revisions:

1. Get the right attitude toward the task to be accomplished; that is, get a specific aim to be attained. Strengthen the interest in this aim by contact with persons who are enthusiastic about it.

2. Start promptly and energetically, no matter how unsuccessful the first attempt promises to be. Mistakes constitute part of the learning process.

3. Practice with a will to learn. Watch for successful movements. Try to eliminate unnecessary action.

4. Obtain suggestions from others but do not depend upon them too much. They may not fit your case. Try them to discover whether or not they will work.

5. Watch the results of your practice and measure the amount of your improvement from time to time in order to keep interested.

6. Avoid cheap sensation, confusion and worry.

RULES INSURING STAGNATION

1. Regard the task as worthless. Avoid persons, books and papers that might stimulate interest.

2. Hesitate to make a first attempt. You might make some mistakes. Wait until you can work without making any errors.

3. Do not study much. If you do study, do not concentrate upon your subject. Just try to get through the study period as easily as possible. Watch the clock.

4. Do not listen to suggestions from anyone.

5. Do not try to measure the amount of improvement. There will be none.

6. Think of something other than the task to be accomplished.

OPPORTUNITIES OF THE MINISTER'S WIFE

MRS. W. E. ZIMMERMAN

Much is said about the trials of the minister's wife, but little is said about her opportunities. Believe it or not, she does have many opportunities. Someone has said, "It is not the fact that some seem to have more opportunities to become a person of note than others, but the difference lies in the ability to seize the right moment and make effective use of what is thrown in one's path." The minister's wife who stands by the highway of life bemoaning the fact she has no opportunities will never have any. She thinks if she was in First Church, or her church was bigger, or the congregation was composed of a different class of people, or her husband were different and

recognized her abilities, she could do and be something too. She will never succeed anywhere. Her opportunity lies right at her door, but she must reach out and seize it before it leaves or someone else captures it.

So many opportunities are covered by a disguise which it takes ability to penetrate. A whole life may be wasted and the opportunity gone if the minister's wife waits for the disguise to be removed. Sometimes the opportunities are small and not noticed because of waiting for the one big opportunity to do something great and unusual but of this be assured, it will never come.

The opportunities of the minister's wife are many and far reaching. What a field of opportunity her home, her husband, her community and her church provide for her. Far more opportunities than she can avail herself.

She may not know it but the minister's wife has the opportunity of being one of the greatest leaders in the church. But to really succeed she must not let it be found out that she is the leader. She can make the church just about what she wants it to be. Often Sunday school teachers will conform their methods and tactics in teaching to a few suggestions, instructions, or hints from the minister's wife. Every teacher has problems to solve and is usually glad for all the help she can get. She can help stir every teacher to reach some goal and see the Sunday school grow, just the result of a little leadership.

Do you know, minister's wife, that you can help mold the future church? Many teen-age girls do not have mothers whom they can go to with their problems, so what a wonderful opportunity the minister's wife has in giving them the counsel they need. If she does not see her opportunity, she may take their problems lightly or even laugh at them because they seem so unimportant to her;

but to them they are real tragedies. Her attitude may cause that girl to go on the rocks. This opportunity of being a counselor is so big that the future church will be affected by it. For she will have to give counsel to them about their social life, their style of dress, their conduct, and their spiritual problems, all of which will have some bearing on the future church. So the minister's wife needs to be careful how she avails herself of this opportunity.

Minister's wife, do you know that you have the opportunity of being a director—not a dictator—of something far more important than a bank, but which has to do with the raising of thousands of dollars all over this country? It is nothing more or less than the W.M.S. You may not be the president nor the vice president, secretary nor treasurer nor the superintendent of study but you can work back of the scenes so that the president's program will be full of life and enthusiasm; the study will be interesting and vital and the whole tone of the W.M.S. will be spiritual. Yet no one need realize she is being influenced by the minister's wife, because she has a way of getting things well done without seeming to do a thing. There is not much publicity in this kind of an opportunity, but there are big rewards. If the minister's wife is seeking publicity just cross this opportunity off the list.

There are many who are about ready to give up and think it is not worth while and no one seems to care or notices what they do; to these the minister's wife has the opportunity of being an official "encourager" or "appreciator." Many a soul has made it through to heaven because the minister's wife encouraged him when it was so dark, and let him know that she was counting on him. Maybe she let some struggling soul know that she appreciated what they had done, no matter whether it was small or great. Sometimes

it is not easy, but it is the opportunity of the minister's wife to do all the disagreeable things. But where is the minister's wife to get her encouragement and appreciation? She has the opportunity of going without or giving so much that some will bound back to her.

Every minister's wife has heard the minister preach much on faithfulness: how his people should be faithful at every service, and they should be. By all means they should be at Sunday school. They need the Sunday morning sermon for their spiritual food. Sunday night they should come so they can help get sinners saved. They will starve to death spiritually if they fail to attend prayer-meeting. But what has this to do with the minister's wife? Nothing, only that she has the opportunity of tearing down by her example faster than he can build up by his admonitions. If she must leave after Sunday school to cook dinner for company or because Aunt Jane and Uncle George—who never had a regard for church or God—are coming, others in the church will “go and do likewise.” If she can miss services for every little ache or pain or whim, the harvest will be a congregation of wishy-washy, undependable, unfaithful, unloyal members.

Folks talk about the minister's wife quite frequently. It cannot very well be otherwise. She belongs to the public, and whatever belongs to the public is going to receive some comments, which will be something after this fashion: If she dresses well they will say she spends too much for clothes. If she does not give much attention to her clothes and wears soiled, unpressed garments, they say she is sloven, and why doesn't she buy some new clothes? “What do they do with their money anyhow?” Or, “I don't see why the minister's wife is so friendly with Mrs. Brown. Why she runs there all the time, and she hasn't been to see me for months.” Quite often at some class meeting or so-

cial gathering she is the chief topic of conversation, and someone is always kind enough to tell her all that was said—no doubt just to see how she will act. What an opportunity to show *how* to *act*. If she gets all worked up or hurt or down in the dumps or up in a miff tree they will be sure to talk about her at the next gathering. What an opportunity to just brace her feet, swallow the dose with a calm, sweet smile, and go away to improve on her weak points (for they will never leave her in ignorance of them), and stick to her good ones till finally she will be glad she is the topic of conversation for her behavior will be above reproach.

One of the greatest opportunities the minister's wife has is to be a “filler in” or “flunky” or a whatnot. If the chorister is absent she may have the opportunity of leading the folks in song. The pianist is sick and there is no one else to play so will the minister's wife please play? The president and vice president of the W.M.S. are not present, will she officiate? The N.Y.P.S. speaker failed to show up, so will she fill in the time? Grandma Jones' rheumatism is bad this morning, will the minister's wife take her car and bring her to church? The Reverend forgot to bring—well, whatever it was he forgot to bring—will she go home and get it? And so on through the days she can have the opportunity of wondering if she is to be or not to be this, that or the other, but mostly other. You may say this is not much of an opportunity, well, that is where you are all wrong, for if she fills all these places acceptably it will be like oil on machinery. But if she does not, it will be like throwing a monkey wrench into the works. You know that the “filler in” or the filling of a sandwich is the best part, so after all she may have the best job of all.

Would it not be fine if every stranger who visited our churches could go away with a feeling of having been made wel-

come and would want to come again? The minister's wife has the opportunity of helping to produce this kind of an atmosphere. A glad, warm handshake and a cordial greeting by her can make the humblest person feel like a king. Cultivate the habit of being cordial. It will do wonders for the minister's wife and the people she meets. What she does for others will be returned to her with interest

Maybe, so far, none of these opportunities have seemed like opportunities to the minister's wife, so possibly she would enjoy the opportunity of being like an oyster. When an oyster gets a grain of sand or something hard that hurts inside its shell, instead of trying to get it out, it starts covering it up with a fluid which in the end becomes a beautiful pearl. If there had been no pain there would have been no pearl. The minister's wife is sure to receive her grain of sand—that unkindness, that unjust criticism, that mean slighting remark—but do not be less wise than an old oyster and go around nursing your sore spot and showing everyone your sore thumb, but right away start in to cover it up with a spirit of charity and it will result in something beautiful and desirable.

Or perhaps she would rather be a shock absorber. Shock absorbers save the folks in the car the jolts of the rough highway. When gossip, troubles of various nature and cutting remarks about anyone come her way, treat them as mere passing incidents along the highway of life, act as a shock absorber and prevent all those things from reaching anyone to hurt them. Do not think that it is an opportunity to carry unkind news of any nature to anyone.

One of the greatest opportunities that comes to the minister's wife is the opportunity she can give her children. Because their mother is the minister's wife they have the opportunity of associating

with and being inspired by the best folks in the world. They have the opportunity of meeting the best preachers and evangelists, the District and General Superintendents, and the missionaries. What an opportunity for our children to be influenced by such men and women. She need not have a worry that there is a booze drinking, cigarette smoking, picture show going, vulgar talking person in the group. Any minister's wife should be glad that she is a minister's wife for that opportunity alone.

Last, but not least, the minister's wife has the opportunity to either make or ruin the minister. If he is a failure she undoubtedly is the cause but if he is a success she had nothing to do with it (so *he* thinks)—it was his own attainment. Now here is another opportunity—just let *him think* so, but she *knows* different. If the minister's wife should want to ruin her husband there are plenty of opportunities. For example, do like one minister's wife, come dragging in late to almost every service. That is, if she comes at all, and want all the praise, honor and attention. If she does not get it, she goes home way down in the dumps, saying no one is treating her right and she has her husband started down the toboggan of ruin.

It seems as though most women like to talk to the minister, and like to get pretty intimate about it. So the minister's wife has the opportunity of becoming jealous, making a scene, and when he wants to move, he fails to get a call to a better place all because of her jealous fits.

Just because the minister is the minister's wife's husband is no reason why she should talk unladylike to him unless she considers that her opportunity to ruin him. Maybe he is not as smart as she is, but it will not help him any to call him dumb, or crazy, or awkward or "big ox" or anything of like nature but it may give him an inferiority complex and he will just about live up to his names.

While some good ministers have been ruined by their wives, on the other hand, some wives have taken a poor excuse of a preacher for a husband and have made a real preacher out of him. If your husband is not the very best minister he could be, avail yourself of the opportunity at hand, start working on him, but do not let him know you are doing it. But you can let him know that you expect great things of him. A man will do almost anything for a good woman, so expect your husband to be the best preacher on the district and you will about make him so. Be sure your criticisms are kind, helpful criticisms. Do not nag and find fault, but be a helpmate in every sense of the word.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. If the minister's wife will not be satisfied with anything but her best, and try to excel at every opportunity, not for the pay she will get nor the thanks she will receive, but for the good she can accomplish, many will rise up in that day and call her blessed.

SECURING RECOGNITION FOR THE CHURCH

EDWIN HARDY

THE first twenty-five years of our existence as a church has been a period of adjusting ourselves one to another, as the church is made up of a heterogeneous array of people from different sections of the country. We are not different in doctrine, but in environment and elementary detail of organization and method. A retrospective view of the past years gives us a sense of satisfaction as to the success of our development along these particular lines, yet, we realize our task is not finished and much improvement remains to be made. Especially one phase of adjustment is still in the embryo stage and needs careful at-

tention and planned effort. This phase of our development is the making of proper adjustment with our environment, which we might call securing recognition for the church.

We shall confine our discussion to the most vital point, as we see it, in the securing recognition for the church, and that is cultivating right attitudes toward our environment. We are all aware of the fact that we are living in a very complex social order, the more so at present because of the new forces which have come in, upset, and disrupted our normal balance socially, politically and economically. I think there is no question in the minds of thinking men today but that we are passing through a stage of transition, an old social order is in the last throes of death and in the midst of its convulsions a new one is taking its place, and with it, new ideals of government, new ideals of social and racial relations, and new ideals of moral standards. Just the attitude to take toward these new conditions as pastors and members of the Church of the Nazarene is a great problem indeed.

Should we enter a crusade against mal-adjusted social conditions, should it be a crusade against loose, corrupt morals, or should it be a crusade toward political reform, which is the program and effort being put forth by so many religious bodies today? Would not a solution of these problems at the present be of untold good and afford happiness to the masses who are suffering under such conditions? We all would immediately answer in the affirmative. But back of all this there is a higher good for humanity, and that is, the saving, sanctifying power of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which gospel we champion. To give to men this gospel is to pick them out of the miry clay of sin, and transform them into new creatures in Christ Jesus, and implant eternal life within the soul. A

crusade against sin and for the salvation of souls should be our sole objective.

There are two things we must know: First, we are not to take a passive attitude of seclusion by drawing away from the world at the time when the world needs us most. Second, I am equally as certain we are to take an aggressive attitude. The very fact that we are living in such perilous times is reason enough for us to reach out to this world in an endeavor to save as many as possible. Certainly this cannot be done unless we take the right attitude in order to secure recognition enough to win the confidence of the people. The attitude of aggressiveness should spur us to seek every open door which would enable us to get our church and its message before different groups of people.

To many pastors, the Ministerial Association presents an open door in their respective cities. Such affiliation gives social recognition needful to broaden the field of operation. One prevalent complaint over our church is the fact that we are reaching only certain classes of people. Our sphere of operation is limited. We believe that our message is just as good for the rich as for the poor, the wise as the unwise, the educated as the unlettered. It seems to me we are just as responsible for one class as the other. The Ministerial Association goes a long way in helping our pastors to reach groups of people heretofore untouched by our church. The Ministerial Association has recognition and prestige in every city where such organization is actively functioning. Usually if the services of a minister are in demand for certain public occasions, such minister is chosen from among the ministers of the association. Due to one introduction in one large public gathering a minister may win more recognition for his church than he would otherwise gain in a year of intense effort. Opportunities to hold de-

votions or speak to Parent-Teacher's Associations, social and civic organizations, assemblies in public schools, union services, and other various businesses, civic, social and religious groups will be afforded that otherwise might not come.

We must realize that people are not going to flock to our churches without planned effort on our part to reach them. The business houses today that are selling the most goods are the ones that are successful in keeping their product before the attention of the public. Since our church is young, misunderstood, and not well known, it is imperative that we put forth more concentrated effort to get it before the public and keep it there. In view of this fact, every available, legitimate, unquestionable means of advertising should be used. The radio and newspaper are the two most effective mediums which produce the most immediate results. It is true that these two agencies are not always readily available, but there are ways and means of making them available. I wonder how many in this group today even see that the announcements of your Sunday services are put in the newspaper each Saturday evening? Some people have said that they attended our services due to the fact they read the Sunday announcements. The subject of the morning or evening sermon was of special interest, therefore they came to hear it discussed—people who had never attended the Church of the Nazarene before. I need not enlarge on the value of the radio as a means of winning recognition, as its inestimable value and merit has been, and is being demonstrated even by many of our pastors today in various sections of the country.

The alert pastor will always find other, many times unexpected ways, of advertising his church. If our gospel is able to redeem and save the lost, it is worth all the time and money we can afford to advertise its redeeming merits. I noticed

an advertisement once which read like this: "Action, action, concentrated action brings business." Not only will concentrated action bring business to the business house, but concentrated action directed into the channels of the church for the kingdom of God will bring many weary, sinsick souls to the saving knowledge of our matchless Christ, and will increase the number of our own members.

The point I am trying to make is this: We are an intricate part of this world in which we live, a vital part of the social and moral structure, we have a place to occupy and a duty to discharge. It is fatalistic to assume an attitude toward our righteousness and the world about us such as to disqualify us to reach out along right lines to take our place in the world. We must not, for fear of becoming worldly, withdraw from proper activities, duties, and responsibilities.

Week before last I read a very interesting, instructive article in the *Herald of Holiness*, written by Doctor Chapman, our guest speaker, entitled, "Conquest the Price of Life." Let me quote a very brief paragraph, pregnant with vital truth: "Christianity is a militant religion and whenever it ceases to be militant it ceases to be Christianity. Further, Christianity is a conquering religion, and when it ceases to make conquest, it falters and dies." Further we quote: "Sometimes I am asked, what is your greatest fear for the future of the Church of the Nazarene? Invariably I answer, I fear that we will become spiritual passivists, and die from inactivity—die of the dry rot."

Can we conceive of our church being militant and conquering unless we reach out into the maze of this turbulent world? Unless we live close to its heart throbs, sufferings, groans of despair, and calls for help? Just what reasons Doctor Chapman had in mind that would directly cause this condition he fears, we cannot tell, but I am sure we are all agreed

that there are causes which would create such a condition. A false attitude of righteousness among our pastors and people in reference to the world would certainly create such a condition as he mentions. If we could but realize we are in the world, though not of the world; and that we should use the things of the world as a means to further the kingdom of God in the world; then we should not be overcome, defeated, and spotted by the world, but we shall be truly militant conquerors and overcomers of the world.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SYSTEM- ATIC STUDY

WM. TIDWELL

Mr. Webster says to study, "Is to apply oneself to the acquisition of knowledge." He also states to act systematically is to act by system or method. So we presume to study systematically would be to have some system or method by which we acquire knowledge.

If anyone is to successfully prosecute any business, profession, or calling he must have the necessary qualification and equipment with which to do so. The farmer must have his implements, the carpenter his tools, the soldier his equipment, the surgeon his instruments. It would be vain for any of these to undertake his work without this equipment. And, just as this is necessary for these, so it is indispensable for the minister. Knowledge, set on fire by the Holy Ghost, is to the minister just what ammunition is to the soldier or instruments are to the surgeon. This is obtained by good, hard systematic study. This is not easy. One who is mentally lazy, unless he obtains help from the Lord, is doomed to failure. There seems to be an idea in the world if a person is indolent and fails in about everything he undertakes that probably he has missed his calling—that God designed him for a preacher! Just the op-

posite seems to be the Bible teaching. The prophets and apostles, it seems to a man, were busy men.

God declared His people were destroyed for lack of knowledge. We can have a good idea of the character of a minister by preaching to his congregation. There is such a vast difference in the response of congregations. Some will be interested if you give them some little sentimentalities; others if you give them something that will tickle and make them believe they are blest; but, often, if you present to them the good, deep, substantial truths of the Word of God there will be little response. The trouble is they have been given superficialities till they have no appetite for truth. You cannot always preach successfully the same messages to different congregations. The reason is clear. This explains why some pastors and some evangelists do not make good in some places. If one has mastered and enjoys higher mathematics, astronomy, and psychology and then you put him back in the first reader you will not expect him to be hilarious over his discoveries. It is God's plan for people to make progress in spiritual truths, just as they do in acquiring knowledge of natural things. And they will, if properly taught. This requires knowledge, and knowledge is obtained by study. And we know this is the plan of God. In 2 Tim. 2: 15 we have the solemn injunction, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth." Too many of us are too much like the colored minister who expostulated with his white brother for his preparation for his sermons. He said, "You studies and plans and makes outlines and the devil knows jist what you gwyne to say and he has de people all prejudiced agin all you gwyne to say. While I gits up and does not know what I'se gwyne to say. De devil does not know what I'se gwyne to

say, and the Lawd has no idea what I'se gwyne to say. Dat's why I gits results." Well, there may be some truth in this method of reasoning, but we think it is overdrawn.

The successful minister must know God and His Word. Not only is this true, but in order to know the signs of the times, it is necessary for him to acquaint himself with existing conditions as they present themselves from day to day. There are confusion and bewilderment everywhere today. Perplexity abounds. The people are looking to the minister for light. It is said that an old steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River was one day asked, "Do you know where all the rocks and sandbars are in this river?" To which he replied, "No, I do not know where they all are, but I do know where *they are not*, and I can steer my boat there." There are treacherous rocks and hiding shoals these days and the true pilot, if he is to bring his barque safely through, must know the path of safety where hell's reefs are not to be found. False doctrines abound. Damnable heresies are on every side. Multitudes seem to be lacking in spiritual discernment. God has placed the true minister on the walls, and he is to get God's message and give the people warning. God have mercy on the unfaithful hireling, and the professional, mechanical shepherd. He will stand before God a bloody man.

This is a busy age. The true minister is the busiest man, we believe, in the world. Multitudes are hungry. Good people, Christians, faithful members of the Church, are out of employment. Hearts are broken. The sick, suffering, and dying are on every hand. All these look to the minister—to their pastor. He will have pleas like this, "I hesitate to put another burden upon you, but I have exhausted my resources and what else can I do?" And this a devout, faithful member. What must a minister do? He must do some-

thing, and he will. But while he looks after these unavoidable needs, he must somehow find time for prayerful, careful, and systematic study. This is our plan, personally: In the morning, the first thing after breakfast, if there are matters that must be attended to at once (and there usually are) we look after them. But we attend to only such as cannot be put off. Then we go to the study, and, without losing a moment, remain as long as possible—four or five hours if possible. There will be days when this is impossible, but we seek to make it up—to redeem the time. I have a note book and am on the lookout for thoughts and illustrations. Our little day is short. Our candle will soon be exhausted. Never more we will pass this way. We have one paramount purpose in life and that is to get to heaven and take as many as possible with us.

The minister was to preach at a state penitentiary, and the day before the service he went to the prison to see how things were arranged. In looking over the auditorium where the prisoners were to sit, he saw two chairs draped in black. He asked the warden what that meant. He replied, "They are for two men who are condemned to die in the electric chair soon. They are to occupy these chairs. This will be their last service and their last sermon." We wonder how often, if we knew, there are draped chairs in our audience. God help us to be faithful.

THE PRESENT CALL OF THE MINISTRY

HAROLD R. IRWIN

TODAY is your day and mine, the only day we have, the day in which we play our part. What our part may signify in the great whole we may not understand; but we are here to play it, and now is our time. This we know, it is a part of action, not of whining. It is a part of love, not of cynicism. It is for us to express love in terms of human helpfulness.

The minister today, as has ever been the case, needs primarily to have a dynamic personal Christian experience. He must not depend on mere morality. Morality is good and is acceptable of God, as far as it goes; but the difficulty is, it does not go far enough. "Is not my fifty fathom cable as good as your one hundred fathom one?" asked the sailor. "Yes, as far as it goes; but in water one hundred fathoms deep if it does not go within fifty fathoms of anchorage, of what use will it be in a storm?" A spiritual man, a minister, is like one who learns the principles of music and then goes on to the practice. The tendency today in many places is to minimize the need of the dynamic personal experience whereby the motives that once were centered around the self-life are organized anew with love for Christ dominant. There is the teaching prevalent in the land that man by nature is not essentially bad and that given the proper environmental opportunities he will live a good life, a Christian life. These people stress natures and not nature, education and not dynamic religion. The former is important when given its proper place, but must come subsequent to the impartation of a new nature.

We must help to educate the rising generation in our church. Many of the older churches have laid all the emphasis

*To serve the present age
Our calling to fulfill,
O may it all our powers engage,
To do our Master's will.*

*Help me to watch and pray,
And on Thyself rely,
Assured if I my trust betray,
I shall forever die.*

on the educational process of salvation. We have reacted against this and have swung, with the pendulum, to the other extreme and have stressed the experiential aspect only. We need to stress the need of the works of grace and to show the place of growth as well.

We are living in an enlightened age. It used to be that an eighth grade education was considered sufficient for the average person, and only a few ever finished institutions of higher learning. During the last quarter of a century, enrolment in these schools has increased tremendously. In the last decade the attendance has increased over 100 per cent. The ministry today must serve more and more this class of people. When our church was founded it was not so essential that good preaching be done. Almost any sincere one could go before the average congregation and exhort and find a ready response to the gospel's call. It is true also that in every great period of spiritual awakening and advancement preachers have paved the way by fearlessly and efficiently proclaiming the divine Word of God. Melancthon, Zwingli, Luther, Calvin, and Knox are examples around the time of the Reformation. Later came Wesley, Whitefield and Spurgeon and others. In recent years there has been a trend toward superficial preaching and thinking, but I believe that there is coming a stronger demand, on the part of the laity, for good preaching. This offers a challenge to the ministry which it must meet. We dare not fail. To do so will be to bring dishonor to the gospel and to the cause of Christ.

If ever in the history of the world the Spirit of Jesus, as exemplified in the story of the Good Samaritan, needs to be practiced, it is today. The Church has too often passed by suffering humanity, and taken the attitude of the Levite, who looked upon the sufferings of the poor man on the Jericho road, and thought to himself, "It is too bad all this has hap-

pened to you. You should have had more sense than to come down this dangerous road," and who then gathered his robes about him and passed by. The church has rested complacently in self-contentment and has lived too much apart from the needs of men. All around are poverty and want, and she has done little to alleviate the sufferings of those living almost in the shadow of her steeples. She has failed to grasp the whole significance of Jesus' summary of the commandments when He said, "The first of all the commandments is, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and strength.' This is the first commandment, and the second is like; namely this, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' There is none other commandment greater than this." The church has overlooked the fundamental principle of religion given by James—"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world." The church, in trying to keep "unspotted from the world," has forgotten the unfortunate ones.

In this day we need to know the philosophy of life of the man on the street. We should know what he is doing and what he is thinking. We are living in an age when people do not take the preacher as an unquestioned authority. Dogmatism may have worked in the past, but it does not work today. Scientific methods have instilled into the minds of the people a desire to know the *why* of things. The minister must therefore apply good authority in the proper way. He must present the Word of God in an attractive manner, not following the oily grooves of custom too closely. New approaches must be made, as we are living in a changing world. We must adapt our methods to a changing people, who still **hunger** for the changeless message of redemption.

There is need for ministers who are mild in manner, but bold in method; condescending to all, but compromising with none; whose spirit will be sweet, but whose message will often be bitter; whose words are soft, but whose truths are hard. They must be elastic, and yet rigid. Thoughtful always, especially in dealing with other people. Courageous enough to stand by the minority in situations where the crowd is clearly in the wrong. Ministers are needed whose spinal cords possess both the qualities of a string and of a crowbar. It may be necessary at times to bend double, and again to be as rigid and immovable as Gibraltar. He must learn the art of applying both extremes; and yet in all he must be kind, tender, loving, and cheerful. The minister that the world needs now must so conduct himself here upon earth that his presence will be helpful in increasing the sum total of human happiness.

THE PASTOR'S SCRAP BOOK

I. L. FLYNN

OH, PEOPLE OF GOD!

"Because thou servedest not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies."—BIBLE.

THE GRACE OF PATIENCE

"In your patience possess ye your souls."
—JESUS.

What sublime words are these! You may keep your soul in your possession by your patience! Patience is a soul possessor, it is also a soul possession, that is, it is a part of your being. Awakened and intensified in your conversion, purified in your sanctification, therefore a "fruit of the Spirit."

Patience must be exercised and lived, thereby it will grow. Patience can be

AT CHURCH NEXT SUNDAY

"If I knew you and you knew me,
How little trouble there would be.
We pass each other on the street,
But just come out and let us meet—
At church next Sunday.

"Each one intends to do what's fair,
And treat his neighbor on the square,
But he may not quite understand
Why you don't take him by the hand—
At church next Sunday.

"This world is sure a busy place,
And we must hustle in the race,
For pleasure hours some are not free
The six week days, but all should be—
At church next Sunday.

"Don't knock and kick and slam and slap
At everybody on the map,
But push and pull and boost and boom,
And take up all the standing room—
At church next Sunday."—BULLETIN.

perfected—because it is a part of your being.

Fret and worry are the very opposite of patience. To be fretful and impatient is mistrusting God. Patience is a high attainment of faith in God—believing and receiving the Bible as the very Word of God.

To become impatient is not accepting God at His word. Trust and patience are so closely allied that you cannot have the one without the other. If you are trusting implicitly you have peace, rest—patience.

The Israelites were kept out of Canaan because of their grumbling and complaining. At least their unbelief broke out in complaining of God's leadership and dealing with them. God wants us to accept His way. And to accept it we must patiently wait for Him to work out our pathway in life. The prophet said, "Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." And David said, "Wait, I say, on the Lord."

WEDDING BOOKS AND MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES



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No. 82. Upright design of roses and violets with ribbon border and bells. Size 14×17 inches. **30c each; \$3.00 a dozen**

No. 83. Orange blossoms with ferns forming two ovals. Can be used for photographs if desired. Size 14×17 inches. **30c each; \$3.00 a dozen**

No. 87. Oblong in style. Orchids, lilies and ferns attractively arranged. Printed in colors. Size 11×14 inches. **20c each; \$2.00 a dozen**

No. 84. Gothic design with Church spire. Orchids and lilies in full colors. Size 15×20 inches. **40c each; \$4.00 a dozen**

No. 187. On gray background, delicately worked into five colors with garlands of roses, lilies and orange blossoms. Church scene. Size 12×16 inches. **12c each; \$1.25 a dozen**

No. 220. A New Folder with a rose design in colors on the cover. On the inside of folder is verse from Matthew 19 with design of orange blossoms. On the right side is Marriage Certificate beautifully lettered. Size $6 \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Each in envelope. **Price 15c each; \$1.50 a dozen**

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